

## Train for the Worst, Hope for the Best

By Sgt. Dan Purcell  
122nd MPAD

CAMP AL TAHREER, Baghdad -- A guard spots a suspicious looking vehicle but before he has a chance to investigate further, the driver hits the gas and races forward-It all happens too fast-The car explodes and chaos ensues.

Immediately, National Guard Soldiers representing the 103rd Field Artillery Regiment (Rhode Island), 1st Battalion, 303rd Armored Regiment (Washington State), Charlie Company, 118th Medical Battalion (Ohio), and the 1st Battery, 141st Field Artillery Regiment (Louisiana) respond by sealing the breach and attending the wounded...Fortunately, it's only an exercise.

"The purpose of the exercise is to prepare ourselves in the event that there is a mass-casualty incident, like a vehicle borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) detonation near a gate area," said Capt. Chris Carbone, plans officer, 103rd FA.

Setting the stage with a mock-up of an entry control point, the Soldiers assume their stations. An explosion is simulated and the participants go into action, doing what they would normally do during a real world event, Carbone said.

"After the detonation, quick-reaction forces secure the area, medics rush in to provide triage and evacuation for the wounded, and the fire-fighters are on hand to extinguish any



Photos by Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

fires," said Carbone, a native of Cranston, R.I. "This is not the first time for us to conduct this exercise. Shortly after we conducted our first exercise we had a real incident out at another entry control point (ECP), which reinforced the need to continue these training sessions."

According to 1st Sgt. Brian Rikstad, Company C, 1-303rd Armor, a native of Kent, Wash., this exercise is a preview of what his Soldiers can expect to experience while manning a gate.

"We have Soldiers working [gates] everyday. They oversee approximately 600 local workers who line up outside in the parking lot to come in," Rikstad said. "So we are practicing for when a VBIED tries to get into our area. We've already had one attempt by a VBIED at another [check point], and that is why it is critical for us to be out here training."

Following the completion of the exercise, the Soldiers gathered together for an after action report.

"You can't really simulate an actual event but it is critical to train as



best you can for it," Command Sgt. Maj. Kim May, 1-303 Armor said. "It's all about lessons learned...once you've been through a real event you can only build on that experience through training. The key is to make sure you have all the right players and they all know what to do."



In the event of a mass casualty incident, medics assess the wounded prior to evacuation.

# Operation Amber Waves Gives Farmers Wheat Seeds

By Spc. Erin Robicheaux  
256th BCT Public Affairs

BAGHDAD -- The Tigers of the 256th Brigade Combat Team are continuing their efforts to assist the people of Iraq build their future. Soldiers and local council members are working hand in hand distributing high quality wheat seed as part of Operation Amber Waves, a program to revitalize agriculture in this predominately rural sector just west of Baghdad. This in turn, will ultimately raise the economy.

Maj. Carrie Acree of the 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion attached to 2nd Battalion, 156th Regiment, 256th BCT has been building a relationship with the Agur Quf Najia council, whose area covers 99 percent of the sector in which 2nd Battalion operates.

"Iraq's wheat seed has been degraded tremendously because the farmers harvest their grain and then use the same wheat to replant," Acree said. "What they have right now is fit for livestock. We're trying to bring that wheat grade back up to where it's good for human consumption. Thus they can get a better price on the market and can start selling it internationally. This will help the economy tremendously."

So far, the operation has brought in 434 tons of very high grade wheat seed. Since a very large portion of Iraq is farmland. It's a huge deal.

According to Maj. Steven Kvaal, 433rd Civil Affairs Battalion, the farmers go through a very quick process of obtaining the seed. All cars entering the area go through a checkpoint search before they are allowed into the distribution area. The first step is for the farmer to meet with a council member and present their land deed for



By Erin Robicheaux, 256th BCT Public Affairs

Agur Quf Najia council members distribute grain seed to local farmers as part of Operation Amber Waves. The seed distribution supports improved agriculture economics through the utilization of improved seed stock.

approval. The legitimacy is determined by the council. The amount of seed that is given to a farmer is contingent upon the amount of land that he has. Once the outcome has been decided, the council member writes out a ticket and stamps it for validity. The farmer then drives his truck to the pick-up site, receives his seed, and drives home to plant it.

The Ministry of Agriculture has guaranteed to purchase all of the grain produced after the harvest at a set price. That price is slightly lower than what they could get at the world market. It's an incentive for the farmers to sell their harvest internationally because they can make a slightly higher profit than what the Ministry of

Agriculture would pay them for it. Regardless, if the farmer can't find a buyer on an international market, they are going to make money on this wheat. This will help the economy as well as in building their wheat seed grade back up to an A Grade. The farmers will then use that wheat seed to start producing for the next planting.

Acree praises the Iraqi farmers and Najia Members for their participation in the process.

"The reaction of the people has been very nice," she said. "They've been helpful and tremendously grateful for this. They thank us constantly and understand that we are here to help them to legitimize the Najia."

## Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

**No one is hurt.**  
**hunaak naas muSaaboon.**

### Wednesday

High: 63  
Low: 37



### Thursday

High: 63  
Low: 37



### Friday

High: 59  
Low: 36



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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## News Notes

### Cops Trailed Along by Doughnuts

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) -- Police followed a trail of doughnuts to find a stolen Krispy Kreme delivery truck. "It has a happy ending," Sgt. Robert Simmonds said. "The evidence was brought back to the police station, and the cops are eating the doughnuts." No arrests were immediately made. The truck was returned to the company. Although Simmonds was joking about police taking the contents of the truck, he acknowledged seeing Krispy Kreme doughnuts in a station conference room Thursday. "I suspect that the manager from the Krispy Kreme might have given us a little thank you for our efforts," he said.

### Guinea Pig Will Get His Revenge

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. (AP) -- An Indiana University student has admitted tossing a guinea pig tied to a makeshift parachute out of an eighth-floor dormitory, police said. The 19-year-old student, who could face a felony charge of animal cruelty, told IU police that Thursday's incident was a "prank gone bad." IU police officer Brice Boembeke said the student told police he had intended to retrieve his pet once it floated to safety, but it got stuck in a tree on the way down. Janitors at Briscoe Quadrangle rescued the animal, which was slightly injured. The guinea pig is doing well at the Bloomington Animal Shelter.

## Actress Greets Soldiers at Hood X-mas Party

FORT HOOD, Texas (Killeen Daily Herald) -- More than 500 Soldiers and their family members had lunch Sunday afternoon with a mom that everybody loves.

Actress Doris Roberts, from the television sitcom *Everybody Loves Raymond*, made a special appearance at a Christmas lunch for the military.

While the wait was a little longer than some expected, several military families said they enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate with the entire military community.

Santa also made an appearance to give out early Christmas gifts.

First Command Financial Group, Hooters in conjunction with Pilgrim's Pride Chicken and Country Crock helped sponsor the event.

Roberts helped serve spoonfuls of side dishes to the families. She said she liked serving because it got her closer to the people there.

Roberts was among a dozen people honored last week by Secretary of State Colin Powell for work as an



By Erin Robicheaux, 256th BCT Public Affairs

Actress Doris Roberts, star of the TV show "Everyone Loves Raymond," greets soldiers and their families during a Christmas party at Fort Hood Sunday. Roberts made an appearance to thank the troops for their efforts in Iraq.

ambassador with the State Department's CultureConnect program.

Sgt. John McDowney, a Soldier with the 4th Infantry Division, sat with Roberts during his meal. He said Roberts was very down to earth and she had thanked them for their service.

"It's nice to know she's taking an interest," he said.

Roberts said she thinks about her three healthy, wonderful grandchildren and the great life they have ahead of them and thanks those who protect them.

"I just wanted to do something to give back to the people who are risking their lives to make ours safe," Roberts said. "You have to be grateful for that."

## Sweethearts Await Reunion Delayed 60 Years

(Seattle Times) -- More than six decades ago, a 16-year-old girl named Helen and an 18-year-old soldier named Paul carved their initials in the trunk of a tree and pledged their love.

He proposed marriage and gave her a ring. She said yes.

Then he was sent away to war, writing her letters that spoke of his love for her and his anxiety about the war. On a mission over Germany, his plane was shot down. Captured by Nazis, he spent more than two years as a prisoner and was moved from camp to camp, tortured and forced to witness atrocities that haunt him still.

At home in Arlington, on the other side of the world, she wondered why his letters had stopped coming, and whether he loved her still. Finally, believing him dead, she placed her engagement ring in a safe-

deposit box and mailed his leather flight jacket to his mother.

A few years after Paul left for war, she married a man named Bob Lund, and they were married for 47 happy years before Lund died in 1992. Yet Helen Lund never forgot her first love. About three years ago, Paul McKee re-entered her life, contacting her through a brother and renewing their friendship through letters.

"I wish I could be there and hold you," he wrote when she was ill.

On Wednesday, Helen Lund, now 78, will see Paul McKee, now 80, for the first time since 1942, in part thanks to a local radio-station contest which is paying his airfare from Utah, where he's been living alone since becoming a widower in 1992.

In preparation for his visit,



Photo courtesy of Helen Lund

Helen Lund saved this World War II photo of Paul McKee from their engagement days.

she has bought a toe ring and lounging pajamas and treated herself to a pedicure and a perm. He has assured her that he's still got a full head of hair, though it's white now, and that he loves her still.

## Dolphins Stun Pats With Comeback Win

MIAMI (AP) -- Tom Brady threw a dumb pass and A.J. Feeley threw a beauty, finally giving the Miami Dolphins something to savor in this long, miserable season: an upset of the New England Patriots.

With Brady's ugly interception providing an opening, Miami scored two touchdowns in the final 2:07 to stun the Patriots 29-28 Monday.

Feeley threw for the game-winning score, a 21-yard touchdown pass to Derrius Thompson on fourth-and-10 with 1:23 left.

The stunning victory rivaled the biggest in Dolphins' history, because they've rarely been so woeful. With the win, Miami (3-11) avoided being swept by AFC East opponents this season.

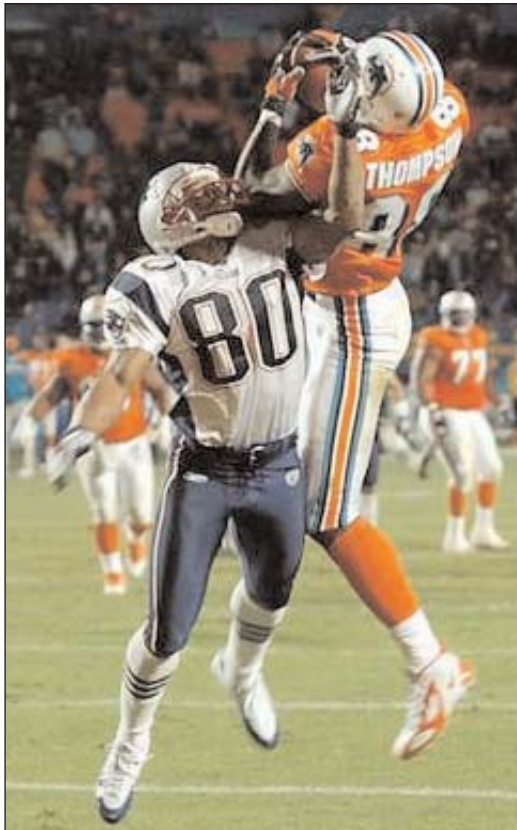
The Patriots appeared to clinch the win when Brady threw his third touchdown pass to Daniel Graham for a 28-17 lead with 3:59 left.

The Dolphins drove 68 yards to score on Sammy Morris' 1-yard run with 2:07 remaining, and then came Brady's uncharacteristic mistake.

On third down, he threw as he was being sacked by Jason Taylor. The off-balance pass sailed directly to Ayanbadejo, giving Miami a first down at the Patriots' 21 with 1:45 to go.

Three plays later, on fourth and 10, Thompson beat Troy Brown - a receiver who doubles as a fifth cornerback - and made the winning catch in the end zone.

Brady's fourth interception, a desperation throw picked off by Arturo Freeman with 58 seconds left, sealed the upset. The takeaways offset a 121-yard rushing performance by New England's Corey Dillon.



AP

Miami Dolphins' Derrius Thompson (88) catches a 21-yard touchdown pass with 1:23 left in the game as New England Patriots' Troy Brown (80) defends Monday. The Dolphins defeated the Patriots 29-28.

## Iverson Carries Sixers, Still Loses to Jazz

PHILADELPHIA (AP) -- Allen Iverson surpassed 50 points for the second consecutive game but fouled out with 4.5 seconds left, putting Mehmet Okur on the line for the winning free throws in Utah's 103-101 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Monday night.

Iverson followed up his 54-point game in Milwaukee with 51 this time, becoming the first Sixers player to score 50 in back-to-back.

Iverson scored 21 in the third quarter to help the Sixers overcome a 16-point halftime deficit, only to watch the comeback fall short from the bench. After Okur hit his foul shots, a running layup attempt by Willie Green clanged off the back of the rim, and the Jazz snapped

a seven-game road losing streak and a three-game skid overall.

After blowing their big halftime lead, the Jazz used a 15-4 run in the fourth quarter keyed by Boozer and Carlos Arroyo, who finished with 11 assists.

Iverson hit a running layup and Kyle Korver, who had 16 points, drained his fifth 3-pointer to tie it at 101 in the final minute.

Iverson single-handedly turned around a game that, for the first half, was sloppy.

Iverson scored on a variety of shots, hitting 3-pointers, off-balance drives and a reverse left-handed layup that brought the crowd to its feet.

The teams combined for 30 fouls and 27 turnovers in the first 24 minutes, and the



AP

Philadelphia's Allen Iverson splitting two Utah defenders during the first half Monday. game was marred by five technical fouls, including an ugly altercation early in the third quarter.

## In Brief

### Snipes Sues NYC over Warrant

NEW YORK (Reuters) -- Actor Wesley Snipes sued the city of New York



Monday, charging that it has no jurisdiction to arrest him as part of an Indiana paternity case. The suit seeks a court ruling invalidating an arrest warrant issued by a New York family court judge. The Manhattan judge took the action on an interstate paternity petition filed in Indiana by a woman who says the star fathered her son. In his suit, Snipes charges that the woman is a mentally ill, former crack addict who has made many claims to be the mother of children to other celebrities.

### Author of Potter Books Finishes #6

NEW YORK (AP) -- *Harry Potter* readers, here's a holiday surprise: J.K. Rowling announced Monday that she has completed the sixth Potter novel, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. Rowling noted that while she is pregnant with her third child, she has had the time "needed to tinker with the manuscript to my satisfaction and I am as happy as I have ever been with the end result. I only hope you feel it was worth the wait when you finally read it." Rowling did not say whether the new book's length would top the 870 pages of *Order of the Phoenix*.